

The Emperor Francis, notwithstanding his counsellors, hesitated about taking the first step; but at length, yielding to the solicitations of England and the secret intrigues of Eussia, and, above all, seduced by the subsidies of Great Britain, Austria declared hostilities, not at first against France, but against her allies of the Confederation of the Rhine. On the 9th of April Prince Charles, who was appointed commander-in-chief of the Austrian troops, addressed a note to the commander-in-chief of the French army in Bavaria, apprising him of the declaration of war.

A courier carried the news of this declaration to Strasburg with the utmost expedition, from whence it was transmitted by telegraph to Paris.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor, surprised but not disconcerted by this intelligence, received it at St. Cloud on the 11th of April, and two hours after he was on the road to Germany.<sup>2</sup> The complexity of affairs in which he was then involved seemed to give a new impulse to his activity. When he reached the army neither his troops nor his Guard had been able to come up, and under those circumstances he placed himself at the head of the Bavarian troops, and, as it were, adopted the soldiers of Maximilian. Six days after his departure from Paris the army of Prince Charles, which had passed the Inn, was threatened. The Emperor's headquarters were at Donauwerth, and from thence he addressed to his soldiers one of those energetic and concise proclamations

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<sup>1</sup> In one of De Quincey's essays a curious incident in connection with the use of the semaphore telegraphs is described. A ship had arrived at Plymouth or Portsmouth with despatches from Lord Wellington, and important news from the Peninsula. This was being transmitted in an epitomized form to London when a dense fog came on and interrupted, until the following morning, the transmission of the message. The words "*Wellington defeated*" had been telegraphed to London, and the temporary ending of the message at this point gave rise to the greatest excitement in the Metropolis until the completion of the sentence, "*the French at Salamanca.*" arrived the next morning, when the fog had cleared off.

<sup>2</sup> Jomini (tome iii. p. 158), saying that Napoleon on 12th, not 11th, April received the news of the Austrians having crossed the Inn on 10th April, remarks on the wise foresight by which the Emperor had established a line of telegraph stations (signal-posts) throughout Germany. Thiers (tome x. p. 121) takes the same date, 12th April. Metternich (tome ii. p. 351), who was then in Paris, says 8 A.M. 13th April. For the

extraordinary folly of the  
Austrians in wasting time in bringing their army on to the  
Inn, instead of  
debouching from Bohemia, thus tripling their march, see  
Jomini (tome iii. p.  
153), who attributes Napoleon's safety to this error.